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filed May 7, 1999, and PCT International Application No. PCT/IE99/00033, filed May 7, 1999.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace now pending claims 4-8, 12, 13, 16-20, 22-26, 29, 30, 36, 38-41, 45, 46, 52-56, 58 and 59 with the following complete set of claims:

- 92
4. (Amended) A filter as claimed in claim 1, wherein the membrane is of a material selected from one or more of polyether block amide (PEBAX), polyester, polyethylene, polyurethane, terephthalate, nylon or, as appropriate, copolymers thereof.
5. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating is at least partially of a material selected from a non thrombogenic material and a fluropolymer material.
6. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating is of a hydrophilic material.
7. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in any of claims 1 to 6 wherein the coating is of a hydrogel material.
8. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating includes a physiologically acceptable additive.
12. (Amended) A filter element as claimed claim 1, wherein the filter body is surface treated prior to application of the coating.
13. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the filter body comprises a proximal body section, a distal body section and an intermediate body section interconnecting the proximal and distal body sections, one or more of the body sections being of laminate construction.
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16. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the filter body has regions of varying hardness or stiffness.
17. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the filter body has a durometer of between 60D and 70A Shore hardness.
18. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the filter body has a first relatively stiff portion and a second relatively soft portion.
19. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein one portion or section of the filter body has a larger wall thickness than the wall thickness of another section or portion.
20. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the filter body comprises a proximal body section and a distal body section, one of which forms a stiff first portion and the other of which forms a soft second portion.
22. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 18, wherein the filter body comprises a proximal body section and a distal body section interconnected by an intermediate body section, one or both of the proximal body section and the intermediate body section forming the soft second portion, the distal body section forming the stiff first portion.
23. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the proximal body section has a ribbed outer surface.
24. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein a plurality of spaced-apart longitudinal ribs are provided on the proximal section.
25. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the proximal body section includes corrugations.

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26. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the filter body has expansion means to facilitate retrieval of the captured embolic material.

96
29. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the filter body includes an intermediate portion extending proximally of the distal portion, the intermediate portion being of a membrane material that is stretchable.

30. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 1, wherein the filter body is a membrane of a memory material.

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36. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 34, wherein the filter body comprises a proximal body section and a distal body section, one of which forms said stiff first portion and the other forming the soft second portion.

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38. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 34, wherein the filter body comprises a proximal body section and a distal body section interconnected by an intermediate body section, one or both of the proximal body section and the intermediate body section forming the soft second portion, the distal body section forming the stiff first portion.

39. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 36, wherein the proximal body section has a ribbed outer surface.

40. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 36, wherein a plurality of spaced-apart longitudinal ribs are provided on the proximal section.

41. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 36, wherein the proximal body section includes corrugations.

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45. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 42, wherein the filter body includes an intermediate portion extending from the distal portion, the intermediate portion being of a membrane material that is stretchable.

46. (Amended) A filter element as claimed in claim 43, wherein the membrane is of a memory material.

910
52. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 49, wherein said frame is constructed such that filter body is biased toward said second, deployed configuration.

53. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 50, wherein said inlet openings are defined at least partially by said arms.

54. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 50, wherein proximal portions of said arms extend generally outwardly and distally from said guidewire when said filter body is in said second, deployed configuration.

55. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 50, wherein distal portions of said arms extend generally outwardly and proximally from said guidewire when said filter body is in said second, deployed configuration.

56. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 48, wherein the distal portion of the tubular member further includes a pod for receiving therein the filter body when in said first, collapsed configuration.

58. (Amended) A device as claimed in claim 48, wherein said guidewire is solid.

911
59. (Amended) A device of any of claims 48 to 58 wherein said filter body comprises a sleeve slidably disposed on said guidewire.

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